GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:207
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2005
INFANT MORTALITY RATE
Jha Shri Raghunath

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of children under the age of five die every month in India due to malnutrition despite full utilization of funds allocated under Integrated Child Development Services scheme;

(b) whether Integrated Child Development Services scheme`s main aim is to lower the infant mortality;

(c) if so, whether the Government has identified the reasons responsible for the total failure of the scheme;and

(d) the details of the steps taken/proposed to be taken to bring decline in infant mortality rate?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH):

(a) to (c) The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme aims at holistic development of children below 6 years. Reduction in the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout is one of the objectives of the Scheme. The Scheme which was launched in 1975 in 33 blocks now covers 5652 blocks in the country. Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has declined from 110 in 1981 to 63 per thousand live birth in 2002. Similarly, under-5 mortality has declined from 161 in 1983 to 87 in 2003. Moreover, an evaluation of the ICDS Scheme by National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has revealed that there has been a significant impact of the Scheme in reduction of IMR. it has, therefore, not correct to say that the Scheme has been a total failure.

(d) ICDS Scheme is being expanded to bring uncovered habitations/settlement within its ambit. Moreover, Government of India,in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, is also implementing several programmes/schemes viz. National Diarrhea Disease Control Programme; National Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) Control Programme; Vitamin-A Supplementation; Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation; Promotion of breast feeding; Complementary feeding from six months of life; Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness to address the issue of high infant and child mortality in the country.